



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism
Tuesday, March 14, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.

By

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HB 963 HD1 – RELATING TO BROADBAND

Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i, representing the State's broadband interests, supports HB 963 HD1.

The appropriation of \$33,000,000 will ensure that Hawai'i can fully utilize the initial \$100,000,000 in state allocation for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program. BEAD is the largest of the federal broadband funding programs supporting states and territories, and requires that states provide matching funds of at least 25% of the total project costs. The program funds a wide range of eligible costs, and places a priority for states to address robust, reliable and affordable broadband access to those residents that are currently unserved by existing telecommunications providers.

Hawai'i is currently in the process of developing the required Five-Year Plan, due to NTIA in July, that will articulate the state's approach to statewide investments to maximize the benefits of federal broadband funds. This effort is funded by BEAD Planning Funds allocated to Hawai'i, and shall include community outreach for the planning effort, and over the course of the project execution funded by state BEAD funds.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support on HB 963 HD1.